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RAYMOND, HARPER & CO., Publishers.

New-York Daily Times.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS.

The Passenger Bill.

SPEECH OF SENATOR SEWARD.

MAIL STEAMER APPROPRIATIONS.

THE COLLINS LINE.

Exciting Debate.

Speech of Mr. Walbridge.

EXTRA BILLY AROUSED.

THIRTY-THIRD CONGRESS...Second Session.

SENATE.... WASHINGTON, Thursday, Feb. 15.

PASSENGERS IN STEAMSHIPS.

Mr. SEWARD, from the Committee on Commerce, asked the consideration of the bill regulating the carriage of passengers in steamships and other vessels. The bill was read twice and put upon its passage, as follows:

A BILL TO REGULATE THE CARRIAGE OF PASSENGERS IN STEAMSHIPS AND OTHER VESSELS.

SEC. 1. No master of any vessel owned in whole or in part, by a citizen of the United States, or by a citizen of any foreign country, shall take on board such vessel at any foreign port or place, other than a foreign adjacent territory of the United States, a greater number of passengers than in proportion of one to every two tons of such vessel, not including children under the age of one year in the computation, and computing two children over one and under eight years of age, as one passenger. That the space appropriated for the use of such passengers, and which shall not be occupied by stores or other goods, nor the personal baggage of such passengers, shall be in the following proportions, viz: On the main and poop decks or platforms and on the deck-houses, if there be any, one square foot for each sixteen cubic feet of space in front of such deck. If the height of such deck or platforms shall not be less than six feet, and on the lower deck, (not being no orlop deck,) if any, one passenger for eighteen cubic feet aforesaid: *Provided*, if the height or distance between the decks or platforms shall not be less than six feet, but so as that no passenger shall be carried on any other deck or platforms, nor upon any deck where the height or distance between decks is less than six feet, with intent to bring such passenger to the United States, and shall leave such port or place and bring the same, or any number thereof, within the jurisdiction of the United States; or if any master or owner of any vessel shall take on board his vessel at any port or place within the jurisdiction of the United States a greater number of passengers than in the proportion aforesaid, or, in case of the passage aforesaid, with intent to carry the same to any foreign port or place other than such as aforesaid, any master or steamboat, every such master shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and on conviction thereof before any Circuit or District Court of the United States, shall, for each and every passenger taken on board beyond the limits aforesaid, or the number aforesaid, be fined in the sum of fifty dollars, and may also be imprisoned, at the discretion of the Judge before whom the penalty shall be recovered; but should it be necessary for the safety or convenience of the vessel, that any portion of her cargo, or any other articles, or arties, should be placed on, or stored in, any of the decks, cabins, or other places appropriated to the use of passengers, the same may be placed in such manner or enclosure as the proper officer of the vessel may direct, and the space thus occupied by the same shall be deducted therefrom, and in all cases where goods or coal, the upper surface of said lockers or enclosed spaces shall be deemed and taken to be the deck or platform from which measurement shall be made for all the purposes of this act. It is also provided that one hospital in the spaces appropriated to passengers, and separate therefrom by an appropriate partition, and furnished as its purposes require, may be prepared, and when used, may be included in the spaces allowable for the same; but the space shall not exceed more than one hundred superficial feet of deck or platform.

SEC. 2. No such vessels shall have more than two tiers of berths, and the interval between the lowest part thereof and the deck or platform beneath shall not be less than nine inches, and the berths shall be well constructed, parallel with the sides of the vessel, and separated from each other by partitions, as berths ordinarily are constructed, and shall be at least six feet in length and at least two feet in width, and each berth shall be occupied by no more than one passenger; but double berths or twice the above width may be constructed, each berth to be occupied by no more and by no other than two women, or by one woman and two children under the age of eight years, or by husband and wife, or by a man and two of his own children under the age of eight years, or by two men, members of the same family; and if there shall be any violation of this section in any of its provisions, then the master of the vessel and the owners thereof shall severally forfeit and pay the sum of five dollars for each passenger so taken on board of said vessel on such voyage, to be recovered by the United States in any port where such vessel may arrive or depart.

SEC. 3. All vessels, whether of the United States or any foreign country, having another capacity or engaged in any other service by law (other than sailing passengers) shall, when employed in transporting such passengers between the United States and Europe, have, on the upper deck for the use of such passengers, a house over the passage-way leading to the apartments allotted to such passengers below deck, firmly secured to the deck or coamings of the hatch, with two doors, the sills of which shall be of least one inch above the deck, so constructed that one door or window in each house can be opened on the leeward side; and all vessels so employed, and having the capacity to carry one hundred and fifty such passengers or more, shall have two such houses; and the stairs or ladder leading down to the aforesaid apartment shall be furnished with a hand-rail of wood or strong rope; but berthy hatches may be substituted for such houses in vessels having three permanent decks.

SEC. 4. Every such vessel so employed, and having the legal capacity for more than one hundred such passengers, shall have at least two ventilators to purify the apartments or apartments occupied by such passengers; one of which shall be inserted in the after part of the apartment or apartments, and the other shall be placed in the forward portion of the apartment or apartments, and one of them shall have an exhausting cap to carry off the foul air, and the other a receiving cap to carry down the fresh air; which said ventilators shall have a capacity proportioned to the size of the apartment or apartments will lawfully authorize the reception of two hundred such passengers, the capacity of such ventilators shall each be equal to a tube of twelve inches diameter in the clear, and in proportion for larger or smaller apartments; and all said ventilators shall rise at least four feet six inches above the upper deck of any such vessel, and be of the most approved form and construction; and if it shall appear, from the report to be made and approved, as hereinafter provided, that such vessel is not well ventilated by any other means, such other modes of ventilation shall be deemed and held to be a compliance with the provisions of this section.

SEC. 5. Every vessel carrying more than fifty such passengers, shall have for their use on deck, housed and conveniently arranged, at least one cookhouse or cooking range, the dimensions of which shall be equal to four feet long and one foot six inches wide for every two hundred passengers, and provision shall be made in the manner aforesaid, as the case may be, for a greater or less number of passengers; but nothing herein contained shall take away the right to make such arrangements for cooking between decks, if that shall be deemed desirable.

SEC. 6. All vessels employed as aforesaid, shall have on board for the use of such passengers, at the time of leaving the last port whereat such vessel shall sail, well secured under deck, for each passenger, in boxes placed in the proportion of not less than one pounds of pilot, two pounds of oatmeal, two pounds of wheat flour, two pounds of pork and two pounds of beef, one pound of molasses, one pound of vinegar, forty gallons of fresh water, two pounds of potatoes, all to be of good quality, and if in steamships of such capacity, but at places where fresh meat, poultry, and vegetables can be procured, of good quality and in sufficient quantity, the quantity of either or any of the aforesaid articles may be increased and otherwise changed in character; and in case provision cannot be procured on reasonable terms, any vessel of either description may be substituted for it, in lieu of five pounds of pork, and the proportion of such substitute shall be as follows: one pound of rice to every five pounds of pork; and the master of each vessel shall deliver to each passenger at least one-fourth part of the aforesaid provisions weekly, commencing on the day of sailing, and at least three quarts of water, and sufficient fuel for cooking daily; and if the passengers on board of any such vessel in which the provisions, fuel and water herein required shall not have been provided as aforesaid, shall at any time be put on short allowance during any voyage, the master or owner of any such vessel shall pay to each and every passenger who shall have been put on short allowance, the sum of three dollars for each and every day they may have been put on short allowance, to be recovered in the Circuit or District Court of the United States; but nothing herein contained shall prevent any passenger, with the consent of the captain, from furnishing for himself the articles of food herein specified; and if put on board in good order, it shall fully satisfy the provisions of this act, so far as regards food; and any passenger may also, with the consent of the captain, furnish for himself an equivalent for the articles of food required in other and different articles; and if, without waste or neglect on the part of the passenger, or inevitable accident, they prove insufficient, and the captain shall furnish comfortable food to such passengers during the residue of the voyage, this, in regard to food, shall also be a compliance with the terms of this act.

SEC. 7. The vessels employed in carrying such passengers, in having the additional to maintain such discipline and such habits of cleanliness among such passengers as will tend to the preservation and promotion of health; and to that end the said vessels shall adopt such regulations as he may adopt for this purpose to be posted up, before sailing, on board such vessel, in a place accessible to such passengers, and shall keep the same so posted up during the voyage; and it is hereby made the duty of said captain to cause the apartments of such passengers to be kept at all times in a clean, healthy state, and the owners of every such vessel so employed, are required to construct the decks and all parts of said apartment so that it can be thoroughly cleansed; and they shall also provide a safe, convenient privy or water closet, for the exclusive use of every one hundred such passengers. And when the weather is such that such passengers cannot be mustered on deck with their bedding, it shall be the duty of the captain of every such vessel to cause the deck occupied by such passengers to be cleansed with chloride of lime or some other equally disinfecting agent; and also at such other times as said captain may deem necessary.

SEC. 8. The master and owner, or owners, of any such vessel so employed, which shall not be provided with the house or houses over the passage-ways, as prescribed in the third section of this chapter, or with ventilators, as prescribed in the fourth section of this chapter, or with the cookhouse or cooking-ranges with the houses over them, as prescribed in the fifth section of this chapter, shall severally forfeit and pay to the United States the sum of $200 for each and every violation of or neglect to conform to, the provisions of each of said sections, and $50 for each and every separate violation of any of the provisions of the seventh section of this chapter, to be recovered by suit in any Circuit or District Court of the United States, within the jurisdiction of which the said vessel may arrive, or from which she may be about to depart, or at any place within the jurisdiction of such courts, wherever the owner or owners, or captain, of such vessel may be found.

SEC. 9. The Collector of the Customs at any port of the United States at which any vessel so employed shall arrive, or from which any such vessel shall be about to depart, shall appoint and direct one or more inspectors of the Customs for each port to examine such vessel, and report, in writing, to such Collector whether the requirements of the law have been complied with in respect to such vessel; and if such report shall state such compliance, and shall be approved by such Collector, it shall be deemed and held as conclusive evidence thereof.

SEC. 10. The provisions, regulations, penalties and liens of this act relating to the space in vessels appropriated to the use of passengers, are hereby extended and made applicable to all spaces appropriated to the use of steerage passengers in vessels propelled in whole or in part by steam, and navigating, from time to time between the ports, and in manner as in this act named, and to such vessels, and to the masters thereof; and on vessels of the net entitled, "an act to amend an act entitled an act to provide for the better security of the lives of passengers on board of vessels propelled in whole or in part by steam, and for other purposes," approved 4th July, 1852, and entitled "an act to amend an act entitled an act to provide for the better security of the lives of passengers on board of vessels propelled in whole or in part by steam, and for other purposes," approved 4th March, 1853, and entitled "an act to amend an act entitled an act to provide for the better security of the lives of passengers on board of vessels propelled in whole or in part by steam, and for other purposes," approved 16 to the Senate. The Senate in enrolling the bill of a passenger law was referred to the last session of a Special Committee, of which the Hon. Senator from New-York, now absent in consequence of ill health, Mr. FISH, was Chairman, and this bill is now reported from the Committee on Commerce. I assented to it reluctantly, because prior to the departure of that honorable Senator from New-York, he being satisfied that there was no time for his bill to pass at this session, he requested me to pay especial attention to it, and but allow action on it during his absence. I withdrew my opposition to the reporting of the present bill in the Committee on Commerce, upon assurances being made that that Senator had assented to the modification of the bill which he, as Chairman of the Select Committee, has reported to the Senate. I have since received a letter from him, from which I ascertain that these statements were erroneous, and that he still adheres to the bill as reported by the Select Committee, which is the fruit of much labor, and the gathering together of much information from all parts of the Union. I think, under the circumstances, the Senate will not be disposed to put this bill upon its passage in this hasty manner.

SENATOR SEWARD'S REMARKS.

Mr. SEWARD—Mr. President: My esteemed colleague, Mr. FISH, submitted at the last session a motion to have a Special Committee appointed for the purpose of considering the defects in the passenger laws, and that Committee reported a bill as remedy those defects. Mr. FISH was leaving here the other day, when a number of New-York merchants appeared and stated there was great embarrassment in their City resulting from the seizure of vessels, owing to the misconstruction of the existing laws. They called on the Treasury Department, and that Department framed a bill which is exactly like this, and they requested me to introduce the bill here. I answered that if it conflicted with the bill of my colleague I could not, and that I must have his permission. My colleague went away suddenly; I did not see him again. They reported to me that he assented to, and approved of the introduction of this bill. I was prepared then, to present it, and I called upon the Senator from Louisiana, one of my associates on the Committee of Commerce, to obtain his cooperation. He told me he had been requested by my colleague to watch his own bill and not to consent to or permit the passage of another, proposed by the citizens of New-York. Thereupon I refrained, and advised the parties in New-York of the circumstances. They replied to me that although I had not seen my colleague, he had assented to it; and they produced to me a letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, saying that the Department understood him to have assented to it. Under these circumstances the bill of my colleague was referred on the motion of the Senator from California, (Mr. GWIN) to the Committee on Commerce, by whom, yesterday morning, I was unanimously instructed to report the bill and urge its passage, and acting upon the information which he then had, he concurred in that recommendation. Thus the bill came here in the shape in which it was sent from the Treasury Department. Now my friend from Louisiana, who has just come into the Senate during the second reading of the bill, says that he has just now received late information from my colleague, Mr. FISH, in which he protests against the passage of this bill. Inasmuch as it concerns the City of New-York, which is more immediately within his representation than mine, that is sufficient to induce me to consent that the matter lie over until we hear further from him.

Mr. BENJAMIN—I have but one word of further explanation, and it is simply to say, in justice to the Senator from New-York now present, that when I informed him of the desire of his colleagues that the bill should be deferred until he could return to have action on it, he cheerfully yielded and did not insist on this bill until he had been informed that his colleagues had yielded his objections.

The following is the letter from the Secretary of the Treasury alluded to by Mr. SEWARD:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, Feb. 3, 1855.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 31st inst., with the accompanying copy of a bill regulating the carriage of passengers in merchantmen and other vessels, and which forms the ninth chapter of the compendium of the revenue laws prepared by this Department; and in reply to state the Department approves the principle in question as amended, but proposes to attach an additional clause to the repealing section, and a copy of which is here with enclosed. Copies of the chapter as amended have been this day forwarded to the Committees on Commerce of both houses of Congress.

I have the honor to be,
Very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
JAMES GUTHRIE,
Secretary of the Treasury.

To Hon. WM. H. SEWARD, United States Senator.

The bill was then laid over.

JUDGES SALARIES.

Mr. TOUCEY introduced a bill to increase the salaries of the Judges of the Supreme Court, which was passed by 30 Yeas to 15 Nays.

Mr. HOUSTON notified the Senate that there was a pamphlet vilifying him, from the pen of THOMAS J. GREEN, which had been laid on Senators' desks. He then gave Mr. GREEN a tremendous lashing.

Mr. CASS said he did not believe a word of such aberges, whereupon the subject was dropped.

COM. PERRY'S SERVICES.

The Committee on Foreign Relations reported a bill appropriating $25,000 to Commodore PERRY on account of his diplomatic services at Japan.

A bill to change the boundaries of the land districts of Iowa was passed.

The Senate, adhering to its amendments with regard to the Swamp Land bill, asked for a Committee of Conference.

PACIFIC RAILROAD.

The Pacific Railroad bill, after a short debate, got precedence over the District of Columbia and Railroad Iron bills.

Mr. GWIN moved Judge DOUGLAS' bill proposing northern, southern and central routes as a substitute for the original bill reported by the Select Committee.

This substitute was received as an amendment by a vote of 33 Yeas, 22 Nays, and will be considered to-morrow.

The Senate adjourned.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

WASHINGTON, Thursday, Feb. 15.

The Speaker announced the first business in order to be BENNETT'S bill granting lands equally to the several States for railroad and school purposes, and that Mr. HAMILTON was entitled to the floor.

Mr. HAVEN appealed to him to yield it, with the view of going into Committee of the Whole on the State of the Union on Appropriation bills.

There were now but fourteen remaining days of the session, and those bills may be lost unless they are at once acted on.

Mr. HOUSTON—No doubt of it.

THE COLLINS STEAMERS.

Mr. HAMILTON then moved that Mr. BENNETT'S bill be committed to the Committee of the Whole on the State of the Union, and demanded the previous question—pending which the House went into Committee on the Mail Steamer Appropriation bill.

Mr. OLDS offered an amendment appropriating eight hundred and fifty-eight thousand dollars for the transportation of the mails from New-York to Liverpool and back, and repealing that part of the Deficiency bill of 1850 which directs the Secretary of the NAVY to terminate the arrangement for the additional allowance to the Collins line, provided COLLINS and his associates shall proceed with all due diligence to build another steamship in accordance with the terms of the contract, and have same ready for mail service in two years from the passage of this act. If this steamship is not ready within the time mentioned by reason of any neglect or want of any diligence on their part, then they shall carry the mails between New-York and Liverpool from the expiration of said two years every fortnight free of charge to the Government, until the new steamship shall have commenced said service.

Mr. OLDS, preserving the amendment was understood, would not trouble the House with a speech, unless the proposition should be opposed.

A VOICE—Opposed.

OTHER PROPOSITIONS.

Mr. TWEED inquired whether there has not been a proposal to carry the mails between New-York and Liverpool at a less rate than was paid to Mr. COLLINS.

A VOICE—Yes, less than one half.

Mr. OLDS replied—Such a proposition has been made.

Mr. DAVIS, of Va., objected to the gentleman postponing the bill now, under the ten-minute rule, and moved the previous question.

Mr. OLDS remarked that he was heretofore favorable to giving notice for a cessation of the price compensation, but subsequent investigation had convinced him that justice to Mr. COLLINS required the money to be given. He had no connection more for the American owner and citizen than all the Governments put together.

Mr. SAVAGE inquired whether stock in the Collins line is owned by British capitalists.

Mr. OLDS expressed the belief that not a single dollar of the line is owned abroad, and spoke in high praise of the honorable and liberal manner of construction of the Collins steamers. That line must go down if this appropriation is withheld. No doubt Mr. COLLINS could purchase the service for much less in such vessels as the Novelty and Pacific. The new steamer Arctic will not, he understood, be excelled by any on the ocean. Mr. COLLINS has more than performed his regular engagement. We have in a fast age—we have the fastest and pretty women—(Laughter)—and we want the fastest steamers in the world. The Collins line must be continued unless extra compensation is withheld. Never yet has the Company been able to declare a dividend on the capital stock, and within a few months the stock has been sold for sixty cents on the dollar. As to the reminiscences of those connected with the Navy Department. Every vessel, he was sure, had her perfect fits, how excellent her steering qualities, perverse their condemnation unless built under their own supervision. He referred to the secretary, Commodore DOBBIN, and others to show the superiority of the vessels of the Collins Line, and that they can be superintended to war purposes.

A REMARKABLE SPEECH—BILLY.

Mr. BOCOCK, of Va., said he had listened with inexpressible surprise to the speech of the gentleman, who was the last member from whom he expected to hear such a remarkable nonsense. It filled him with amazement.

Mr. OLDS asked him to give way for an explanation.

Mr. BOCOCK said he would be willing to do so, and would thank the gentleman to tell why he urged the appropriation when the service could be done just as well for half the money. But the gentleman had taken his seat without making the explanation.

AN EXPLANATION.

Mr. OLDS said propositions were made for carrying the mails for less, but the object was to induce COLLINS to buy off the proprietors. Advertisements were published for the performance of the mail service, but not a single bid was received.

Mr. SMITH—When was that?

Mr. OLDS—During the last Congress the same man have come forward, offering to the service for less money than is paid COLLINS. VANDERBILT wanted to outbid him (OLDS) in his behalf, but he refused. He did not want such vessels as the *North Star*, but those which can be converted into war steamers, like those of the Collins Line.

Mr. SMITH resumed, reading from a speech of Mr. OLDS delivered in 1850, to the effect, "We had a responsible bidder before our Committee, and the bill was reported, for the transportation of the mails from Jersey City to Galway, Ireland, at $10,000 the round trip." If this were so, asked Mr. SMITH, why give Mr. COLLINS $33,000 for the same service? Further, the gentleman from Ohio said in the same speech, that members want to give the same compensation as a bonus to beat the British line. Let them say so, and not do it under the pretence that it is necessary to the mail service of the country. Mr. SMITH read other extracts. As Chairman of the Committee on Post-Office and Post Roads, the gentleman from Ohio was pressed Messrs. COLLINS & Company, but the Paul journeying from Tarsus to Damascus, had fallen under the power of a new light, and had been converted in an extraordinary and wonderful manner to a different conclusion. (Laughter.) He read an account of Paul's conversion, from the New Testament, not in the spirit of irreverence but to point a moral and adorn a tale. The conversion of the apostle—the great persecutor of the Christians of that day—was scarcely less marvelous than the sudden and unexpected conversion of the Chairman of the Post-Office Committee. (Laughter.)

Mr. OLDS expressed the hope that his conversion was as pure as that of St. Paul's, but he should not go to him, (SMITH,) as St. Paul did to Ananias, to recover his sight.

Mr. SMITH, resuming, said the gentleman had alluded to the old fogies of the Navy Bureau to get rid of the responsibility of his official station—

"Oh wa'd some power the gifkie gi'e us
To see ourselves as others see us,
It wa'd free many a blunder free us,
And foolish notion."

He would proclaim it here, that Mr. VANDERBILT offered to do the service for a very considerably less sum than Mr. COLLINS, tendering good security, but the proposition was rejected and duly disregarded, in order to continue the present monopoly. He declared himself opposed to the whole scheme, viewing it as a source of corruption.

MR. OLDS ASKS A QUESTION.

Mr. OLDS asked, if the gentleman was so opposed to extras, how he got the name of "Extra Billy?" (Laughter.)

AND GETS AN ANSWER.

Mr. SMITH retorted: The gentleman had no right to be impertinent. But it was only one who could violate the rules of order who could violate the rule of good manners. He got the name honorably by extra and faithful service in the Democratic party—not by dishonorable means or unworthy tricks. "Do you," he asked of Mr. OLDS, "understand that?" (Sensation.)

Mr. OLDS—You ought to understand it better than anybody else.

Mr. SMITH further replied, saying in conclusion, "Would to God the gentleman's past history was that of a Democrat!"

MR. WALBRIDGE'S SPEECH.

Mr. WALBRIDGE of New-York:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: Looking to the important relations which the City of New-York bears toward the commerce of the Union, and the measure of her annual contributions to the revenue of the country, no one will deny she has a legitimate right to be heard in the matter now before us.

The question involves high and grave considerations. It affects deeply our commercial interests, and is no less than this. Shall American Naval enterprise, invited by your legislation, begun and sustained under your auspices for the wisest considerations, and resting upon a basis of the soundest economy to the country, be neglected or discarded by hesitancy or refusal to continue the contract which gives us a position of ascendancy in the rivalry between this country and Great Britain, in Ocean navigation.

The General Government had long felt the reproach that lay at its door for neglecting the interests of our commerce for seven years, by permitting our transatlantic rival deliberately to assume superiority in ocean steam navigation.

In the year 1839, the first ship of the Cunard Line was built. She was called the *Great Britain*. In the year following, the British Government made a contract for seven years with the proprietors for carrying the mails from their shores to ours. What was the condition of things at that time in the competition between the American and British sailing vessels? The former dyed all competition, in the transportation of light merchandise and of passengers. Superior speed and other sailing qualities placed them far ahead of the English models. What was to be done? The British Government, justly sensitive to the commercial interests of its citizens, sought a remedy in the contract of 1839 with CUNARD; and with it went to that line almost a monopoly of the valuable carrying trade which we had previously possessed.

In this new and profitable channel of business, our Anglo rivals went on in peaceful monopoly for themselves, but sweet discontentedly on our splendid clipper ships, that had been doing a thrifty business, and had distinguished themselves in this special department of the carrying trade.

The country felt the neglect—our people saw the listlessness of the legislative department in the matter, but finally public opinion—the propelling power in our institutions—reached those halls and demanded the establishment of 1845, by which the Postmaster General was authorized "to contract for the transportation of the United States mail between any of the ports of the United States and a port or ports of any foreign power, whenever, in his opinion, the public interest would thereby be promoted;" and the Postmaster General was also directed, in all cases, or offer to contract for carrying the mail between any ports of the United States and any foreign port or place "as give the preference to such bidder as shall contract to carry the mail in a steamship or steamships, and the said contractor proceeding to deliver said ships or steamships of the United States, or to their proper officer, when demanded for the purposes of being converted into a vessel of war, the United States being bound on their part to pay to said owner or owners the fair full value of every such ship or vessel at the time of such delivery, &c. Well, after the passage of this act, which shows that Congress, though tardy, had at last waked up to the importance of doing something, the Postmaster General made proper advertisements for bids to perform the service. None was received. The British had taken the start of us. They had already been reaping the advantage of ocean steam navigation for seven years without competition; had secured high standing, great experience, with unlimited capital. When was there to be found ready to vindicate American enterprise and skill, and to enter into this fierce competition with capital and courageous hand? An energetic and patriotic citizen of New-York, Mr. EDWARD K. COLLINS, came forward, after having been solicited by the Government to make a bid, and submitted his proposals, which were accepted.

The contract of Mr. COLLINS called for ships of 3,000 tons measurement for each steamer, with 1,000 horse-power, to be built of iron, and to be of sufficiently strong construction to be used in time of war. The act of Congress of March 3d, 1847, authorized the Postmaster General to make a bid, and subsequent his proposals, which were accepted.

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The second section of that act made it the duty of the Secretary of the Navy "to accept on the part of the Government of the United States the proposals of Mr. COLLINS and his associates" for the transportation of the United States mail between New-York and Liverpool, and to contract with the said E. K. COLLINS and his associates for the faithful fulfillment of the mission during the term contracted; and in accordance with the provisions of that act, the third section of which declared "that the steamships to be employed by the said E. K. COLLINS and his associates in the transportation of the United States mail between New-York and Liverpool, shall be commanded under the inspection of a naval conductor in the employ of the Navy Department, and shall be constructed so as to render them convertible at the least possible cost into war steamers of the first class."

At the time this contract was executed between the Government and Mr. COLLINS the largest Cunard ship was only 1,400 tons, with 800 horse power. Soon as the superior action of this Government became known, CUNARD laid the keels of the four ships, *America*, *Europa*, *Canada*, and *Niagara*, each of 1,800 tons.

COLLINS, fully appreciating the responsibilities he had assumed, determined to do his part in vindicating the ability of the American people to compete with the citizens of Great Britain, and, he therefore applied to and received from the proper department, a carte blanche to build ships 3,000 tons larger, with a corresponding increase of motive power.

By this increase in the steamships' capacity, it requires but little calculation to demonstrate that the running expenses were increased to the proprietor fifty per cent.

By the original contract it was stipulated that they should run twenty trips out and back, at $19,250 per trip. They were then required to increase the trips to twenty-six at the same rate, and the whole allowance for the whole service was a fraction over $500,000. With all the care, prudence, economy, and the additional advantages of increased speed, it was found the proprietors were making money; and while the mail service was performed faithfully and to the benefit of the postal revenue, the finances of the owners were rapidly collapsing, and the whole business was on the point of failure. The Congress of 1850 thoroughly sifted the whole subject. They found the then existing contract was a losing concern to the proprietors. As legislators, they were unwilling, even if the ability of the owners would allow, that the service should be continued at a loss. The alternative was brought directly before them as it is now: Shall the American ocean steamship line to Great Britain stop, or shall it go on? The answer is found in the act of Congress of the 31st July, 1850, in which it is declared as follows:

"For additional compensation for increasing the transportation of the United States mail between New-York and Liverpool in the Collins line of steamers, to twenty-six trips per annum, or such times as shall be directed by the Postmaster General, and in conformity to the last annual report to Congress, and his letter of the 15th of November last to the Secretary of the Navy, commencing on the first service on the 1st January, 1851, at the rate of thirty-three thousand dollars per trip, in lieu of the present allowance, the sum of two hundred and thirty-six thousand five hundred dollars: *Provided*, That it shall be in the power of Congress, at any time after the 31st day of December, 1854, to terminate the additional allowance herein provided for upon giving six months' notice."

What effect did this legislation produce? By giving the increased compensation of $13,750 per trip, and making the aggregate for each trip equal to $33,000, the total for the service was raised from rising $500,000 to $836,000, and the increase continues until the 1st of January, 1855. After that period, unless you now interpose further legislation, the original contract, which extends to the 1st of April, 1860, will leave the owners to do the service at the sum of $500,000, with the enormous loss which they must necessarily suffer, even if they have the ability to go on with the service.

Now, all the world knows that the rates of living, and the cost in every department of the mechanic arts, have risen 100 per cent. since the original contract was made, and that they have been augmented fully 50 per cent. since the increased allowance by the law of 1850. This of itself would be an unanswerable argument against any attempt at reduction, by failing to come up to the spirit and purpose of the law of 1850. But what advantages have not resulted from the establishment of this American line, in addition to the national reputation we have acquired upon the seas? Previous to its organization the maritime genius of our rival had over triumphed. But in this fierce competition American skill and genius have brought the two great continents nearer together than they have been brought before. The reduction of the cost of freight on light articles has been nearly one hundred per cent.; a reduction of twenty-six per cent. in the price of passage; a reduction of one-third of the time in the passage of crossing the Atlantic. The cheap support of war ships, ready at a moment's warning to pass from the hands of the private owners to those of the Government, and perfectly capable of taking on equipments of battery and iron material, should the exigencies of the service require it, withal officers and seamen, trained by discipline and experience in the science of navigation, constitute an element of strength in time of war, and a commercial facility in time of peace, which place them far beyond all competition.

Are all these advantages, positive and direct, not only to the city which I have, in part, the honor to represent, but the whole Union, to be sacrificed, by a discontinuance of that enlightened policy which has always given to the United States the palm of victory in a struggle for the commercial supremacy of the seas?

Mr. LETCHER opposed Mr. OLDS' amendment, giving notice of one which he intended to offer, authorizing the contract with HANSON, for $385,000. No question taken.

The Committee rose, and the House adjourned.

Resignation of the Assistant Secretary of State.

Special Dispatch to the New-York Daily Times.

WASHINGTON, Thursday, Feb. 15.

Mr. MANN, Assistant Secretary of State, has tendered his resignation recently, unless I am misinformed, and will retire from the Department next month, if not before. It is surmised that the Assistant Secretary is led to abandon a position he has filled with so much credit to himself, and profit to the country, because of a consciousness that unbecoming jealousies of his supposed influence in the Department have been excited by the surreptitious publication of parts of his private correspondence. S.

From Washington.

WASHINGTON, Thursday, Feb. 15.

There is a probability that the Senate will vote to give six months notice to the Collins line of steamers to terminate the mail contract.

The Lieutenant Generalship is likely to be vetoed.

The Chief Clerk of the Department of State and other officials will be examined to-morrow by the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, in reference to the services of Consuls abroad, in order to graduate the pay to those services respectively, but Senators fear making changes on account of difficulty in obtaining the concurrence of the House at this late period of the session.

The French Spoliation bill will not be vetoed.

SUPREME COURT.—JOHN FITCH, Mansfield; T. WALWORTH, and W. R. BEBEE, New-York, were admitted Counselors and Attorneys. No. 20.—Amos J. Bruce et al. vs. the United States. Error to the Circuit Court of Missouri. Judge TANEY delivered the opinion of the Court, affirming the judgment of said Circuit Court. No. 68.—Moses Wenger et al., appellants, vs. Tenby. Argument commenced by CORR for appellants, and continued by BERRY and MAY for appellees.

GENERAL NEWS BY TELEGRAPH.

Arrival of the Steamship Isabel at Charleston from Havana.

CHARLESTON, Thursday, Feb. 15.

The steamship *Isabel* arrived here this morning from Havana *via* Key West, having left Havana on the evening of the 10th. She brings advices to the *Courier* of the greatest importance.

Great excitement existed at Havana in consequence of the discovery of the plot to assassinate the Captain General and his advisers at the opera.

On the 8th instant, Don RAMON PINTO, an intimate friend of General CONCHA'S, was arrested, and thirty-five other influential citizens, and on the 9th instant forty others were arrested. The Governor of Matanzas is also reported to have been arrested; also, ALMENA, the rich planter of Trinidad; also, MARTI, of the opera.

A descent of General QUITMAN upon the Island, with a force of eight thousand men, was very much feared.

There was but little business doing in Sugar, the demand for Spain having ceased and purchasers feeling unwilling to pay former rates. The stock on hand was eighty thousand boxes. Molasses was active at three and three quarters to four.

The weather at Key West was pleasant, and there had been no heavy weather in the Gulf for several weeks past, and no disasters had occurred.

The United States steamer Princeton sailed from Key West for Pensacola on the 10th inst.

The brig Pensacola had run ashore near Key West, but it was expected she would get off unassisted.

The *Courier* has advices from Nassau, New Providence, to the 5th:

A British schooner, Seaside, from Matanzas to St. Jago de Cuba, was wrecked on the rocks at Matanzera, Sagua, during a gale on the 30th January. The passengers were saved, and the vessel will, probably, be got off. The American schooner Recovery, of Rockland, Me., from New-York, for Turk's Island, sprung a leak on the 24th, and was abandoned. The passengers and crew were saved by schooner *Alfred F. Rose*, of Boston. The brig *Appleton*, of and for Swansea, from St. Jago, arrived at Nassau, on the 17th January, leaking. The brig *Trace*, from Portland, Me., for Cuba, was totally lost, at Abaco; a considerable part of the cargo was saved. The brig *Greyhound*, from Santa Cruz for Antwerp, was lost at Horsetye Reef, Dec. 27, some material saved. Schooner *Lightfoot*, from Boston for Mobile, arrived at Nassau, Jan. 26, leaking. Brig *Eagle*, from Tabasco, for Boston, put into Nassau, Jan. 27, for provisions. Ship Thomas Perkins, from Boston for New-Orleans, arrived at Nassau, Feb. 3, leaking; crew exhausted. 70 per cent. salvage has been awarded in the case of the schooner *Greyhound*. Advices from Turk's Island, to Jan. 2, state that the cholera had appeared and carried off 40 persons at Salt Cay. The disease had not reached Grand Turk.

Further From Mexico.

NEW-ORLEANS, Monday, Feb. 12.

By the steamship *Orizaba*, from Mexico the 8th inst., we have further Mexican news.

The Government troops have defeated General CARRERILLO, and a member of the rebels under his command being captured they were shot.

SANTA ANNA offered to Gen. LA VEGA the temporary charge of the Government, but he declined the honor.

The Government papers report that 2,000 insurgents were put to flight in Zakolias.

Shocks of an earthquake were felt at Vera Cruz and the City of Mexico on the 1st inst., and much damage had been done to the public works.

The French steamer has arrived at Vera Cruz, and will take home the followers of Count BOULBON.

Gang of Thieves Broken Up.

SUSQUEHANNA, Penn., Wednesday, Feb. 14.

A gang of youthful burglars who have carried on their depredations for a year past in the vicinity, has been broken up, and the principal parties arrested. They have been doing an extensive business, entering stores and committing petty thefts on the railroad trains. Their operations have been most adroitly performed, and it is probable that they would still have escaped detection if one of the party had not turned State's evidence and exposed the gang. A large quantity of property stolen has been recovered. It was mostly packed, and ready for a market.

Continued Interruptions of the Railroads at Chicago—Adjournment of the Illinois Legislature, &c., &c.

CHICAGO, Thursday, Feb. 15.

The snow storm of yesterday has again shocked up the Illinois Central, the Chicago and Mississippi, and the Galena Railroads. The Galena is in a worse condition than before. One train was nearly all day in getting to the city limits.

The Legislature has adjourned. The Governor has approved the Prohibitory Liquor Law, and it will be voted on in June next.

Mysterious Disappearance.

BALTIMORE, Thursday, Feb. 15.

New-Orleans papers of Friday are received. They contain no news. Eighteen mails from St. Louis were received here to-night.

J. B. SARGENT, Chief Engineer of the Harlem Railroad, arrived here from Washington this morning, and has mys

LONG ISLAND.

Miscellaneous.

Fire is reported, we believe but once yet of interest since this morning, and that is the burning of Forsyth Hall, Forsyth street, by which the Academy of Music, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, in Forsyth street, were endangered. The fire originated in the basement of the Hall, and is supposed to have been the work of incendiaries. The damage done to the building is estimated at $10,000, and to the stock of Mr. Hall, the lessee, at $5,000. The building was insured for $6,000, and the stock for $3,000.

Obituary.

Mr. C. C. Lemon, a well known and highly respected citizen of Brooklyn, died yesterday morning, at his residence in Pierrepont street, in that city, after a short illness, in the 65th year of his age. Mr. Lemon was a native of Connecticut, and came to Brooklyn in 1816, when that city contained but a few hundred inhabitants. He was for many years engaged in the sugar refining business, and was one of the founders of the Brooklyn Savings Institution, and for a long time one of its Trustees. He was also a Director in the Brooklyn Fire Insurance Company, and for many years a Trustee of the Brooklyn Female Academy. He was a member of the Presbyterian Church, and for many years a Ruling Elder in the Church of the Pilgrims. He was a man of the highest integrity, and his death will be deeply regretted by a large circle of friends and acquaintances.

Mr. Lemon was the father of Mr. Robert B. Lemon, the well known Wall street broker, and of Mr. Charles Lemon, the proprietor of the Journal of Commerce.

Theatrical and Musical.

Burton's Theatre.—"Rosedale" was played last night to a very full house, and was received with much favor. The piece is a very pleasant one, and is well acted by the company at this theatre. Mr. Burton, as Rosedale, is very good, and Mr. Lester, as Sir Harry Hawk, is excellent. Mrs. Hoey, as Lady Hawk, is very amusing, and Miss Wallack, as Rose Rosedale, is very pleasing. The farce of "Used Up" will be played this evening.

Bowery Theatre.—Mr. Forrest will appear this evening in the character of Spartacus, in the tragedy of "The Gladiator." The tragedy of "Virginius" will be played on Monday evening, and on Tuesday evening Mr. Forrest will appear in the character of Coriolanus.

Broadway Theatre.—"The Serious Family" will be played this evening, and the farce of "Mischief Making" will be played on Monday evening.

Wallack's Theatre.—"The Rivals" will be played this evening, and on Monday evening "The Hunchback" will be played.

Niblo's Garden.—"The Seven Sisters" will be played this evening, and on Monday evening "The Bottle Imp" will be played.

Barnum's Museum.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of curiosities, and the performances of the Lilliputian Troupe, and the Ethiopian Opera Troupe.

Metropolitan Hall.—Mr. Wood's Minstrels will perform this evening, and on Monday evening Mr. Wood will give a Grand Concert.

Mechanics' Hall.—Mr. Christy's Minstrels will perform this evening, and on Monday evening Mr. Christy will give a Grand Concert.

Chinese Museum.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of curiosities, and the performances of the Chinese Troupe.

Palmo's Opera House.—Mr. Bryant's Minstrels will perform this evening, and on Monday evening Mr. Bryant will give a Grand Concert.

Castle Garden.—Mr. Maretzek's Italian Opera Troupe will perform this evening, and on Monday evening Mr. Maretzek will give a Grand Concert.

Tripler Hall.—Mr. Pelby's Minstrels will perform this evening, and on Monday evening Mr. Pelby will give a Grand Concert.

Bowery Amphitheatre.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of equestrian performances.

Franklin Theatre.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

Olympic Theatre.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

Lyceum.—Mr. Burton's Troupe will perform this evening, and on Monday evening Mr. Burton will give a Grand Concert.

Concert Saloon.—Mr. Hoffman's Band will perform this evening, and on Monday evening Mr. Hoffman will give a Grand Concert.

Metropolitan Theatre.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

Chatham Theatre.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

Bowery Concert Saloon.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

Bowery Theatre.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

Broadway Theatre.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

Burton's Theatre.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

Wallack's Theatre.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

Niblo's Garden.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

Barnum's Museum.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

Chinese Museum.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic performances.

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Bowery Amphitheatre.—The performances at this establishment consist of the usual variety of dramatic

SPECIAL NOTICES.

PERSONAL.

MATRIMONIAL.

LOST AND FOUND.

BOARDING.

HOUSES, &c. WANTED.

WANTED.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

BUSINESS CHANCES.

DRY GOODS.

LAW INTELLIGENCE.

COURT CALENDARS—FRIDAY.

U. S. DISTRICT COURT—Nos. 13, 14, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37.

SUPREME COURT—CHAMBERS—Nos. 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122,

BANK NOTICES.

BANK DEPARTMENT—STATE OF NEW-YORK

BANK NOTICE—BANK DEPARTMENT—ALBANY

BANK NOTICE—BANK DEPARTMENT—STATE OF NEW-YORK

BANKING HOUSE OF ADRIANCE, BAKER & CO.

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THE ASIA'S MAILS.

THE MINISTERIAL CRISIS.

The Debates in Parliament.

The following is by telegraphic express to Asia, from Liverpool:

The Baltic by telegraph arrived at Liverpool at half-past one P. M. on Saturday. We complete here the substance of her news, which is important.

The Arctic arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 10 o'clock, bringing 200 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Pacific arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 141 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Atlantic arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 150 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Canada arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Africa arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Niagara arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Europa arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Persia arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Hibernia arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Scotia arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Arabia arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Cambria arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Caledonia arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Britannia arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Columbia arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Hibernia arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Scotia arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Arabia arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

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The Britannia arrived at Liverpool on Thursday morning at 3 o'clock, bringing 100 passengers and $1,000,000 in specie.

The Columb